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TWO GREAT IDEALISTS

G. F. WATTS, ARNOLD BOECKLIN

By GEORGE B. ROSE

IT was reserved for the last half of the Nineteenth Century to formulate the most abominable doctrine ever promulgated in art—that it makes no difference what you paint provided it is well done; that the cunning hand and the discerning eye are all in all; that a picture should not be a vehicle of thought, but merely the presentation of a fact—the more commonplace the better. To this negation of the human intelligence the name of "Art for Art's Sake" was given; and even now, in the presence of the most awful tragedy in the world's long sad history—a tragedy which should awaken every one to the deep seriousness of life—there are many who think it smart to repeat the silly formula.

It is true that the clear-seeing eye and the well-trained hand are the first essentials of art. No matter how great our ideas may be, they are of no avail unless we can express them. The man who has no vocabulary and is ignorant of the rules of grammar may have the soul of a poet; but he must remain mute and inglorious. But when he has acquired command of words and a mastery of syntax, he is only at the beginning. If he uses them for trite and commonplace purposes, he should live unhonored, and he will surely die forgotten. But if he uses them like a Shakespeare or a Milton, a Byron or a Shelley, a Tennyson or a Swinburne, immortality will be his portion.

So is it with art. Mastery of technique is only the vocabulary and grammar of the artist; and his position in the art world will depend on how he uses them. He may eschew the deep problems of human destiny, and yet win for himself a secure, if an humble position in the Hall of Fame, as did the flower painters of Holland; but no reasonable man would think of giving these a place beside the mighty Rembrandt, who peered into the very depths of the human soul, and dragged its most hidden secrets to the light.

The principles which should govern the production of a work of art are nowhere better stated than by Goethe: "Reality is the nourishing soil whence springs art, the marvelous plant, whose roots should plunge into the real, but whose stem should blossom in the ideal." Of course, the disciples of the "Art for Art's Sake" doctrine look on Goethe with the same contempt with which Bernard Shaw regards Shakespeare; but still those mighty geniuses seem secure upon their golden thrones.

Fortunately the half century that formulated the rules of "Art for Art's Sake" gave to the world two of the greatest exponents of art as intellectual creation—George Frederick Watts and Arnold Boecklin—perhaps the two most searching minds that have been devoted to art since the greatest of Dutchmen passed from earth, neglected and forgotten.

In some respects men could not be further apart than Watts and Boecklin; the one proclaiming in thunder tones the Gospel of Righteousness, and striving, as no one has ever striven with the brush, to justify the ways of God to man; the other, the deep-sighted interpreter of Nature's every mood, as

indifferent to moral problems as the sun that shines alike upon the just and the unjust, making the harvest of the sinner flourish like the harvest of the saint. For the one art is ethical; for the other it is pantheistic. Their points of view are as far apart as the poles; but they are alike in the intense intellectuality, the profound significance of their work.

Watts comes nearer to the greatness of Michelangelo than any other artist that has lived since the mighty Florentine limned those stupendous figures upon the Sistine's vault. They are widely different in their beliefs: Michelangelo a devout Christian, and Watts a believer in no creed save that the world is ruled by a divine Providence for noble ends. Yet the result is much the same. Every soul, of whatever faith, must be uplifted by the prodigious forms upon the ceiling of the papal Chapel. We know that they are intended for Mosaic and Christian characters; but in them there is nothing especially Christian or Mosaic. Their power, their earnestness, their greatness must appeal to every serious mind, regardless of religious belief.

So it is with Watts. His appeal is to the universal soul of humanity, that sorrows and strives, that is cast down and crushed, yet hopes and struggles upward to the end. He who stands in that wonderful room in the National Gallery of British Art consecrated to his genius feels himself uplifted as does he who gazes on the Sistine's ceiling, with something less of awe, but with something more of hope. The one was fed upon the sublime but austere teachings of the Hebrew prophets; the other upon the broad humanism of the Nineteenth Century. Yet the great Englishman is perhaps closer akin to the great Florentine than any one who in the interval has wielded brush or chisel. It would never have occurred to Michelangelo that man should presume to justify the ways of God; while the most striking of Watts' works are devoted to that justification. Still, in their earnestness, their elevation, their intensity they are much alike.

Watts also resembles Michelangelo in his exclusive pre-occupation with the human form. His view of the mountains of Mentone sufficiently proves that he was capable of attaining distinction in landscape; but he found the human body more suited to his message; and he devoted his life to displaying its beauty and its expressiveness. In the body, however, he saw nothing gross or impure. Full and voluptuous as are his splendid female figures, there is never in them any suggestion of impurity. They are used to convey a lofty ethical message, or to delight the eye with their womanly charms.

The man who can enter the Watts room in the London gallery without emotion is not to be envied. His soul is so arid or so light that the great problems of humanity are beyond his ken. All those whom I have conducted thither have stood spellbound before those sublime creations. Of course, there are some too frivolous or too dull to grasp their message; but they appeal, as few works of art have ever appealed,

to the great heart of humanity that loves, and mourns for the loved ones that are gone.

Watts is the supreme painter of the two things that touch closest the soul of man: Love, which binds hearts together, and Death, which tears them asunder; Love, which makes existence sweet, and Death, which makes it bitter; and he strives with an almost pathetic vehemence to justify the seeming cruelty of our mortal lot.

For him Love is not Anacreon's mischievous urchin, or even the dainty youth that Psyche won and lost and won again. It is the universal bond of affection between human hearts; it is the tie that links the parent to the child, the youth to the maid, the friend to the chosen friend. It is the thing that cherishes and preserves, that strews with flowers the long road to the tomb, that sweetens the uses of adversity. It is the power that bears up the weary traveler on life's highway, lest he dash his foot against a stone; that cheers him as he passes through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For him Death is not the grim skeleton that Holbein made to dance before a cowering world; it is the great Consoler, who comes to ease us of the burden that has grown too heavy for us to bear, to wipe the tears from eyes that are red with weeping, and to lay upon them the balm of gentle sleep.

Of all his pictures those which best convey his message are the "Love and Life" and "Love and Death"—the one showing the powerful Love folding his mighty pinions, which could soar heavenward even to the throne of God, and gently sustaining the frail form of Life as she struggles painfully upward over the rocks to her unknown goal; the other, showing Love resolute, yet powerless, to defend the beloved door from resistless Death, who comes with no unkind intent. These pictures are prodigious in their power, the greatest perhaps of all symbolic pictures that the hand of man has wrought. If Watts had painted nothing else, his position among the masters would be secure.

But he painted a great deal more, and his works cover a wide and varied field. Many of them are devoted to the justification of Him who has sent Death into the world. Such are "The Messenger," where the beneficent genius who holds the infant so gently to her bosom comes to relieve the aged from an existence that has grown to be a burden; "Death Crowning Innocence," where the great winged spirit enfolds the babe like a loving mother, shielding it from the sorrows that might have been; "The Court of Death," where the warrior comes to lay down his sword, the monarch his crown, where the woman finds consolation for the love that has brought but grief, and the long-suffering beggar finds relief at last; the noble recumbent figure of "The Dead Warrior" with its pregnant inscription: "What I spent, I had; what I saved, I lost; what I gave, I have"; "The Happy Warrior," who, dying in the discharge of duty, finds a beautiful angel bending above him to receive his spirit.

Others are of a broad moral significance, like the "Time, Death and Judgment," with Time marching so relentlessly on, accompanied by the pallid form of Death, bearing in her apron sweet flowers to lay upon the tomb, and Judgment following so swiftly after; "Mammon" crushing under his brutal feet the noblest types of humanity; "Conscience, the Dweller in the Innermost," with those awful eyes

that seem to sear the soul; "Charity" gathering the children upon her lap.

Perhaps the most popular of all his pictures is the "Hope." Probably it is the most haunting figure that has been created since Michelangelo wrought the Medicean tombs. There she sits with bowed head upon the world, sounding the one remaining chord of her broken lyre! If the painter had not named her "Hope," none would have guessed her title. She is one of those inscrutable beings who haunt us like the "Melancholia" of Albert Dürer, like the Hamlet of Shakespeare. What she means we know not; but the most ignorant love her for her beauty and the grace of her attitude, while the wisest find in her a mystery they cannot fathom.

Watts is no painter of allegories. The genius of a Rubens may invest allegories with beauty and charm; but allegorical pictures are essentially unpictorial. He sought to body forth the great ethical truths in symbols that would be comprehensible to all mankind. In this he failed, as all must fail. Without explanation none could know that the powerful youth helping the frail maiden upon her stony path was Love, or that she was Life; nor could one divine that the godlike woman who approaches the door so gently is Death, or that the child who so resolutely seeks to stay her footsteps is Love. But when the symbolism is explained, a noble and uplifting influence is brought into our lives. This is all that we can expect of symbolic art; and what distinguishes Watts' symbolism from that of lesser men is the nobility of the types, the lofty sweetness and consoling power of the message conveyed and the splendid execution of the pictures.

From the subjects of so many of his works one who had not seen them would imagine that Watts was an austere painter. Nothing could be farther from the truth. His art has all the sensuous beauty, the voluptuous fulness of the Venetians; and many are painted for their loveliness alone, with no thought of aught beside. Titian or Giorgione, Paul Veronese or Palma Vecchio would have loved the luscious forms of the "Fata Morgana," the "Daphne," the "Bacchanal," the "Life's Illusions," the "Eve Tempted," the "Repentant Eve," the Diana hovering over the Sleeping Endymion or the Nymphs that guard the boyhood of Jupiter. In these and many others he reveals all the splendid pagan beauty of the Venetian school, with no suggestion of the moralist or teacher. Indeed I recall none of his female forms that are not richly developed save that in the "Love and Life"; and here there was an especial reason for representing her as delicate and frail. Like Homer he was a lover of "deep-bosomed" women. His ideals were lofty, but there was about him nothing of the ascetic. He loved humanity, and rejoiced to see it in its strength and beauty. He felt that the world was made for man, and that in strengthening, cheering and consoling their fellows, man discharged their highest duty. Being a painter of the eternal verities, he is, like Michelangelo, essentially a painter of the nude. And, like Michelangelo, he realizes that the emotions speak as eloquently in the body as in the face. For this reason, in many pictures the countenance is hidden or turned away, so that from the form alone we must read the struggles of the soul. Thus in the "Repentant Eve" we can see all the agony of the Fall, though her face is hidden; in the "For He Had

Great Possessions" we perceive in his dejected carriage the anguish of the young man who could not renounce his riches even to save his soul; in the "Love and Death" the attitude of the woman with her back to us reveals all the beneficence of her purpose; in the "Minotaur," who looks out to sea, we realize the greedy lust for blood, the monstrous appetite of the fiendish brute.

To such a nature it was inevitable that the spirit of Christian Chivalry, which has been one of the greatest influences in the uplifting of humanity, should make a strong appeal; and some of his most beautiful pictures present to us types of youthful warriors, clad in the steel armor of knighthood. Neither in art nor in literature will you find more delightful presentations of chivalrous heroes than in his "Sir Galahad," "The Watchman," "The Happy Warrior," "Aspirations," or "Una and the Red Cross Knight." They are the very ideals of youthful purity and courage, beautiful young men without fear and without reproach, who live only to serve God and their fellowmen, and to protect the weak against oppression.

It is strange that this fervent idealist should have been one of the greatest portrait painters of all time. It was his ambition to transmit to posterity a living presentment of all the great Englishmen of his day; and the most conspicuous of them will live for posterity as depicted by his brush. With realistic power he gives us the outward lineaments; but this is the least important part of his work. He drags the soul of the man from its hiding-place, so that upon his canvas we see all that passion and thought, toil and aspiration have made of him. It is a faithful portrait of the physical aspect, and a priceless revelation of the soul within. His portraits are like the marvelous bust of Julius Cæsar in the British Museum, in whose lineaments we can read the fate of Rome.

Though he loved woman's beauty so much and presents it so often in all its alluring splendor, he rarely painted the portrait of a woman. As with Rembrandt, it was chiefly character that interested him, and owing to their habits of self-control and their shielded lives, character is rarely conspicuous in the female face. So, like the great Dutchman, he was essentially a painter of male portraits; and they are the most soul-searching presentments of the human countenance that we have had since Rembrandt. Unhappily most of Rembrandt's sitters are unknown to us, and their likenesses shed scant light on history; but Watts has given us the foremost men of his time, with a vital power and a penetrating insight that will make them truly live for posterity.

He said that portraiture was the best discipline for the ideal painter. It keeps him in close touch with the real and prevents his drifting off into those lifeless abstractions that are so often the ruin of the idealist. To be of any value, an ideal work of art must be as real as a picture by Chardin or Jan Steen. Shakespeare understood that. Hamlet and Ophelia are as real as Falstaff and Mistress Quickly. All the great idealists, such as Homer and Dante, Raphael and Michelangelo, are also great realists. They are masters of their craft, who present their figures with convincing realism, but who select for presentation the noblest types.

And few pictures are likely to endure so long as

those of Watts. The most modest of men in every other respect, he felt that he had a great message to transmit to future ages, and he took every precaution to ensure its preservation. His colors were ground for him specially and kept in sealed jars until ready for use. Knowing the destructive influence of too much oil, he used only enough to make the paint adhere. Understanding likewise the disintegrating chemical action that often takes place when paints are mixed, he applied each color separately in points and lines and blotches, so that he got the effect of mixed paints by the blending of the light reflected from pure touches of contrasting color laid side by side. He was not the first of the "Pointillistes." Paul Veronese especially had used the method with conspicuous success. But no other great painter uses it so uniformly, and none other has produced thereby such magnificent results. His pictures are not to be looked at close at hand. To enjoy their beauty one must stand at a considerable distance. Then the contrasting points of color are blended into a mellow splendor worthy to be compared with the works of the great Venetians.

He was Venetian, too, in his method of working. The Florentine made a preliminary drawing, usually many of them; and from these he made a cartoon, from which the picture was painted. The result was a continual insistence upon the line. The Venetian, on the contrary, generally painted from the living model, so that the rotundity of the forms and the play of light and shade upon them are more conspicuous than the outlines, which are somewhat indeterminate. So it is with Watts; and like the works of the Venetians, his pictures gain in vitality what they lose in precision.

There are few things more surprising than the technical mastery acquired by Watts without any technical training. When a boy he went for a few weeks to the Royal Academy; but those were the days when the highest aim of the artist was to produce a huge historical composition painted with colors soaked in bitumen. Watts promptly saw that he could learn nothing there; and he pursued his path alone. Yet the portrait of himself painted at seventeen and the "Wounded Heron" and the two portraits which he exhibited at the Royal Academy at twenty show a mature technique. He always declared that his real masters were the Elgin Marbles. From these he drew the nobility of his forms and those exquisite clinging draperies that clothe the figure while revealing all its beauty. From the first success attended him and in early youth he was able to spend four years in Italy, and a little later to travel through Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt. Yet he made no copies of the great pictures, no drawings of the noble monuments which fell under his observation. Instead, he spent his time in absorbing into his inmost soul the essence of their beauty and power. He did not imitate them; but their loving contemplation made him the great man that he became.

He was strangely independent. He was no recluse. He was on intimate terms with the greatest artists and writers of his day. He was keenly alive to the intellectual movements of his time. Yet he went on his own way, preaching his own gospel of nobility and beauty, apparently uninfluenced by his surroundings. He borrowed nothing either from the technique or the ideas of his associates. He

grew like a great tree standing alone in the meadow, drawing its sustenance from the sunlight, the soil and the atmosphere about it, yet developing solely upon its own lines.

When we turn from Watts to Boecklin we pass into a new world. It is like turning from Michelangelo to Leonardo, from the man of lofty soul to the man of penetrating intellect. Indeed, it is likely that no artist since Leonardo has looked so deep into the heart of Nature.

Boecklin shares none of Watts' conviction that the universe is ruled for a moral purpose. He makes no effort to justify the ways of God to man. He dives into the very heart of Nature, and surprises her deepest secrets. He attributes to her no beneficent design. He rejoices in the infinite variety of her inexhaustible beauty; but he sees her as she is, apparently indifferent to good and evil. He gives us a deeper insight into Nature than any one who has ever wielded the brush; but he has no message of comfort or cheer.

No other man has ever comprehended the soul of nature as he, or embodied her spirit in such truthful types. He has created a vast number of beings that have never existed, and which yet are the most convincing revelations of Nature's attributes. Nominally they are revivals of the old Greek myths; but he has clothed them in new forms, and infused into them a new reality.

The mythological creatures of the Greeks had no deep significance. The centaur was only a horse from whose shoulders sprang the body of a man. The Triton was only a man with a fish's tail. The Satyr was only a boorish peasant with the horns and the legs of a goat. The wood-nymph and the sea-nymph were only beautiful young women, who lived in the forest or the waves.

But the mythical creations of Boecklin reveal the very soul of the elements whence they spring. His wood-nymphs are strange wild creatures, shunning the gaze of man and in whose eyes is all the haunting mystery of the forest. His sea-nymphs have all the gladness and languor, all the beauty and charm of the ocean. In his Tritons we see all the joy and the terror of the sea. His creatures are sad, wistful, timid or ferocious, as Nature is.

Look at the centaur that bears Deianeira in "The Elysian Fields." Here is no artificial conjunction of man and horse, as in the Greek centaurs. It is a true blending of the human and equine natures. It is exactly what would result if so monstrous a union were possible. The blood that flows through the equine body pulsates in the arteries of the human portion. It is not the body and countenance of a man that spring from the shoulders of the brute. It is throughout half man and half horse. It is a monstrous conception, but absolutely true to nature.

Equally amazing in their lifelike probability are the creatures which contend so fearfully in "The Battle of the Centaurs." To find action so intense, animated by a parallel ferocity, we must go to Leonardo's "Battle of the Standard" or to "The Lion Hunt" of Rubens. And the creatures which fight here with such unspeakable rage and hate are wonderful evocations from an unknown but possible world, where beings that are at once both equine and human have sprung from Nature's lusty womb.

And so it is with all Boecklin's other creations.

His fauns and satyrs are no fortuitous conjunctions of animal and human parts. They are not composite creatures. They are thoroughly organic, just such beings as would spring from the union of a goat and a man, suffused in every part with the human and the goatish elements.

He was very fond of the faun and the satyr, and he presents them in a surprising variety, expressive of many of Nature's moods. In the early "Pan Frightening a Shepherd" he had scarcely got beyond the Greek conception; but year by year as his insight into Nature deepens he gives them a greater significance. The "Faun Piping to a Blackbird" of 1864 is a purely original creation, with a vitality, a joy in life, a humanity combined with sensuous animalism that is new to art. The two fauns in the "Springtime Dance" of the Dresden Gallery are still more surprising, compelling us to think of the strange creatures that we see in the forest waters. The nymph riding upon the shoulders of Pan and driving him with blows of his own stick is a singular revelation of the serfdom of senile love. In the Pan who pipes in the "Spring Evening," unconscious of the listening nymphs, we have all the pensive revery of the sunset hour. In the queer satyrs that watch the sleeping nymph we have a presentment of mere animal delight in the contemplation of female beauty that is most amusing.

He loved the forest and wandered in its untrodden depths with a soul awake to all its mystery and charm. He knew not only its outward aspect but its haunted soul; and he presents to us a number of beings that science knows not of, which perchance have never existed, yet which are exactly what the forest would have created if it had desired to reveal to us its deepest instincts, so full of terror, of joy, of wistful longing.

But master as he is of the spirit of the woods and although he was born in Switzerland, it is perhaps in the sea that he is most at home. His sea-nymphs and his Tritons are, it may be, his most amazing creations. They are filled with the beauty, the gladness, the horror of the sea. In them are mirrored the very soul of that fascinating and unstable element, so alluring in its beauty, so terrific in its power. Usually it is the beauty or the terror of the sea, its gladness in the sunlight, its gloom in the shadows; but sometimes he gives us a picture like "The Sport of the Waves" at Munich, with an elemental humor such as has scarcely been seen since Aristophanes held the boards.

His sea pictures are very numerous. He has no superior in depicting its varied aspects in storm or calm, the pellucid splendor of its sunlit waves, its dreamy languor in its hours of rest, the awful fury of its wrath. But he is never content with the sea as it shows itself to common mortals. He peoples it with beings we have never seen; but they are presented with such realistic power that it is hard to doubt their existence when we stand before the canvas.

Of these works perhaps the most delightful is the "Sea Nymphs at Play" in the museum at Basel. These maidens with fish's tails, disporting in the waves and leaping from the rocks, filled with joyous merriment, while the strange sea-monster looks on with greedy eyes, are most delightful; while the fish-tailed baby who is swept down by the receding wave, still clinging to the little fish that she has

captured, is worthy to be placed beside the baby satyr that drags the deer's head in Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne." But this picture is scarcely more charming than the nymph who holds the sea-serpent's head while the triton blows his horn; or the nymph who lies dreaming upon the rock while the triton plays with their rollicking infant; or the mother sea-nymph who looks dreamily out over the waves while her infant presses her mighty bosom, and the husband drags up the seal for the amusement of their older child; or the mermaids who sing their wild songs with the harp-playing triton, listened to by uncanny creatures whose fantastic heads emerge from the deep; or that beautiful being upon whose reclining form the gulls are perching, while in the waters below a strange and hideous thing with fishlike eyes and serpent's tail is staring up.

When we speak of Watts, the first memories that arise before our mind's eye are his great symbolic pictures dealing with the eternal problems of Love and Death. When we turn to Boecklin, the first thought is of these marvelous creatures which he has evoked from the womb of Nature, the children that tell so openly the secrets that hitherto she has hidden from our sight. They are Boecklin's supreme achievement; for in them he is not only a great artist, he is a great creator. He has evoked beings such as Nature has never made, but which are nevertheless apparently inevitable, just what she should have made to express her very soul. He is the greatest myth-maker of all time. He has called into existence vast numbers of beings unlike anything that the eye of man has ever beheld, yet perfectly true to their origin and environment—genuine children of Nature, as real as any that she has borne, and strangely disquieting as revelations of her inmost heart.

If this were all that Boecklin had done, it would suffice to rank him with the masters. No artist, however, has covered a wider field.

He is one of the greatest of landscape painters; indeed, the Germans proclaim him to be the greatest landscapist of all the ages! Certainly none other, unless it be Turner, presents nature in such a variety of aspects. Compared to him the Barbizon painters, exquisite as they are, seem pitifully narrow; each devoting himself to some one style, painting year after year the same sort of pictures, presenting ever similar scenes under similar conditions of light and atmosphere, so that when we have seen one Rosseau, one Corot, one Daubigny, one Diaz, we have practically seen them all.

Boecklin never repeats himself. Like Leonardo, whom he resembles in so many ways, each of his pictures is an effort to solve a new problem. He tries to present every aspect of Nature, her smiling sunlit gladness, the revelry of the twilight hour, the freshness of the dawn, the terror of the tempest. His landscapes, like his views of the sea, though sufficient in themselves, are never without animated forms. In the fusing of the landscape and the figures into one expressive whole he has no rival. His figures bring out the meaning of the landscape, the landscape enhances the feelings that animate the figures, until the united effect is one of poignant intensity. He is the most convincing of pantheists. For him all nature is living and sentient, and the inanimate world shares the joy and sorrow, the love

and anger, of the beings that people it. This combination of nature and man united in the same feelings gives to his works a power that is unique, and sometimes of a singular nobility.

Perhaps no landscape is so impressive as his "Island of the Dead." One never grows weary of that wonderful island with its rock-cut tombs and its solemn cypresses, toward which the boat is bearing another body to its lasting rest. The very spirit of eternal repose, the very sadness and mystery of death are here revealed. Six times he painted this haunting vision under different lights and with varied schemes of color, and each possesses a unique fascination.

Equally unforgettable is "The Villa by the Sea" with that lonely woman gazing out across the waves with unutterable sorrow and infinite longing, while the trees, bending landward, speak of the fury of the winds that have blown from the now peaceful ocean. It is a picture worthy to illustrate the "Iphigenia in Tauris" of Euripides. He repeated the subject five times; but each time with changes of light and color that produce a different but always equally poignant effect.

For a truly religious solemnity nothing can surpass "The Sacred Grove," with the procession of white-robed priests advancing from the temple almost hidden in the shadow of the mighty trees, while two women, shrouded in white, kneel before the woodland altar.

It would be interminable to speak of Boecklin's landscapes. In the majority of his pictures a landscape appears, and always it is a novel creation, evolved from his teeming brain; as real and as convincing as if it had been painted on the spot with photographic accuracy, but dowered with a significance and a unity of effect that no literal transcription could possess. His women usually have classical names and classical attributes; but their beauty is purely modern. Theirs are not the perfect lines of Greek statuary. Their forms are studied from life and their charms are those that we see in the women about us; faulty, perhaps, in their contours, but filled with the allurements of the living flesh.

Boecklin was one of the great revolutionists. To him was first revealed the possibilities of intense color. Men had painted with the mellow splendor of the Venetians, the silvery tones of Moretto or Velasquez, the riotous glory of Rubens, the clear brightness of Fra Angelico; but none had dreamed of the poignant intensity of color that Boecklin threw upon the canvas. It was so intense that the first view of many of his pictures comes to us as a shock. But the more we see them the more we become reconciled to their intensity of contrasting hues till the time comes when we love it as we love the fierce lustre of orient gems. Rüdissühli and others have now learned his secret; and the German exhibitions display many works revealing the lesson that he taught. But amongst them all, he still remains the master.

In his brush work he is the antipodes of Watts. Instead of dry color put on in little stipples of contrasted tints, he paints with a full brush dipped in pigments already mixed. The result will no doubt be less enduring than the works of the mighty Englishman; but for the present age they have an unrivaled splendor.

He is no impressionist. His works are finished

with an extreme minuteness. And this gives to his fabulous creations a convincing realism. We cannot believe that he could have painted with such minute accuracy creatures that he had never seen. This richness of detail also lends to his pictures something of the charm that we find in the primitives. We do not exhaust them at a glance. Every time that we return to them we find something new.

Watts and Boecklin were alike in their independence of the model. Usually they were guided alone by their mental vision. They had trained themselves like the artists of Japan.

In a Japanese art school models are unknown. Suppose the scholars are to paint a tiger: They do not sit down before his cage, pencil in hand. The master takes them to see the tiger and bids them impress upon their minds every characteristic of its form and movements. Then they go back to the studio and each pupil draws or paints the tiger as he remembers it. Thereupon they return to the cage, and in the presence of the beast the master shows them the defects of their work. And so they go back and forth from the studio to the tiger until the pupils have formed in their minds a perfectly accurate conception of how a tiger looks and how he moves, and can paint from memory tigers in every position. Thus are produced those marvelous pictures, embroideries and sculptures, which give us the most accurate and lifelike renderings of plants, birds, fishes and animals that we possess.

Watts and Boecklin had cultivated their artistic memories in the same way, and their imaginations were so vivid that they could see with their mind's eye, living and moving before them, the forms which their genius evoked. In this way they lost perhaps something in literalness; but they gained enormously in freedom and power.

Unlike Watts, whose talents received instant recognition, the greater part of Boecklin's life was spent in poverty and neglect. His works were too strange, too profound, for the public of his youth and prime. In his old age his greatness was recognized, and he had the satisfaction of seeing a world, which had come to scoff, lay at his feet every tribute to his greatness. Like Watts he passed away full of years and honors.

As Watts is scarcely seen outside of England, so Boecklin is rarely to be met with outside of Switzerland and Germany. Our collectors have almost universally ignored both; and but for Watts' generosity in presenting to our nation the "Love and Life," we should scarcely have a worthy example of either on public exhibition. But the war of extermination now waged in Europe is going to reduce the people of that unhappy continent to such poverty as will compel them to part with their dearest treasures. In the buying of foreign masterpieces that will ensue, let us hope that our collectors will not be blind to the merits of the two great geniuses, to whose worth this paper is an unworthy tribute.

George B. Rose

GOD'S EMPLOYMENT

ART is not diversion. The Oversoul
Finds in expression ending of desire.
Man at his best to Beauty must aspire
And in aspiring make his spirit whole.

How poor those lives contented with the dole
Which Fortune gives, while lacking living fire
By which to see their path when they shall tire
Of earth's pursuits and near the unseen goal!

Sweet are the hours of those who simply fare,
Their years obscure, their fortunes without hope,
If blessed with visioned beauty which does bear

Great recompense: unhappy those who grope
Unhelped by art or all great nature's joy
As are those souls who share in God's employ!

Owen R. Washburn